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96-15

January 9, 1996

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EIU BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO MEET FOR FIRST TIME ON JAN. 16

Charleston -- Trustee Keith Branson will act as chairperson when the first meeting of the new Eastern Illinois University Board of Trustees is called to order Tuesday, Jan. 16.

Branson will preside over a vote on the board's new bylaws, policies and regulations before board elections are held and a new chairperson takes office.

Associate Circuit Court Judge Dale A. Cini, Fifth Judicial Circuit/Coles County, will administer an oath of office for the members of the Board of Trustees.

"This is an important day in the history of Eastern," said President David L. Jorns. "We have a tremendous opportunity ahead of us under independent governance. We are fortunate to have a board of trustees with experience and vision that will benefit this university."

Legislation passed by the General Assembly in February, 1995, eliminated the system governing boards, the Board of Governors Universities and the Board of

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BOARD MEETING

Regents, giving Eastern and six other public universities their own governing boards. For the first time, Eastern and its own board will control the functions of budget requests, tuition and fee determination, collective bargaining and other areas.

The trustees will meet in the Grand Ballroom of the Martin Luther King, Jr. University Union, beginning at 8:30 a.m. The trustees will meet the campus community at a 1:30 p.m. reception in the University Union Walkway Lounge. The meeting and reception are open to the public.

The board's first agenda includes taking action to continue business arrangements that benefitted the university under the previous governance structure. The board will vote on participating in a self-insurance pool with other public universities in order to avoid having to pay premiums to conventional insurance companies. Eastern realized cost savings through a self-insurance fund under its previous governing body.

The board will also consider approval of a resolution that would allow Eastern to join the Illinois Public Higher Education Cooperative, an arrangement that provides assistance in the cooperative and joint purchasing of commodities, equipment and services, resulting in substantial cost savings through buying in bulk.

The fiscal year 1997 budget recommendations for Eastern will be reviewed and discussed by trustees, with particular attention given to the capital budget proposal. Eastern has been recommended for more than \$16 million in remodeling and rehabilitation projects but will not receive the funds unless the General Assembly

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BOARD MEETING

approves legislation to increase the state's bond authorization. Trustees spent several hours at Eastern in December touring the campus facilities and learning about the multi-million dollar deferred maintenance problem that exists.

At the meeting, trustees will review the reaccreditation report from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Eastern was recently fully reaccredited by the NCA for the next 10 years based on an evaluation of its academic programs and services.

Trustees will also vote to approve a meeting calendar for the rest of the 1996 calendar year. The recommendation is to hold five more meetings this year: March 11, May 10, July 15, Sept. 23 and Nov. 4.